

## What is Re:NEPA?

*Re:NEPA* is an online collaborative tool that supports the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) NEPA Community of Practice (CoP). This site is dedicated to the exchange of information and ideas on all things related to the NEPA process, environmental compliance, project development and transportation decision-making. This electronic forum is open to any and all Internet users, and allows NEPA practitioners and others to interact on a number of important topics to provide a better, more agreeable, and solution-oriented NEPA process that balances transportation needs with social, economic, and natural environment considerations.

## What kind of information and interactivity does *Re:NEPA* offer?

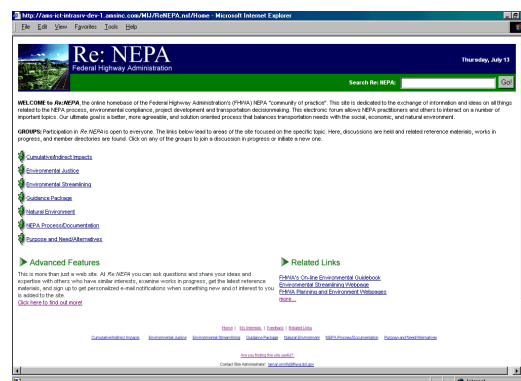
*Re:NEPA* acts as a portal to all of FHWA's NEPA-related information—but *Re:NEPA* is much more than an information repository. In addition to finding the latest NEPA-related reference materials, *Re:NEPA* users can ask questions and share ideas and expertise with others who have similar interests, examine works in progress, and sign up to get personalized e-mail notifications when something new and of interest to them is added to the site.

### Re:NEPA Groups: Dynamically Added Hot Topics

*Re:NEPA* is organized into topic areas, or groups, that are most relevant to current NEPA issues. Unlike static websites, *Re:NEPA* was built to allow its administrators to add new topic areas virtually at the click of the button, ensuring that *Re:NEPA* is responsive to the continually changing informational and collaborative needs of the NEPA CoP.

### For Your Information: Topical Reference Areas

Each group offers its own online reference section. These reference areas are kept continually updated by the *Re:NEPA* administrator and offer up-to-date NEPA- and topic-related information. Users can choose to view information with their browsers or download information to their computers for later use.



The *Re:NEPA* Home Page:  
<http://nepa.fhwa.dot.gov>

### Collaboration: Discussions, Works in Progress, and Member Directories

Each group has a discussion area where users can ask and respond to questions as well as read through previously posted questions and answers. This allows users to gain insight or to help solve individual problems based on the experiences of others. Each group also has a Works in Progress area where the *Re:NEPA* administrator posts draft products for review. *Re:NEPA* users are then able to comment and/or suggest revisions to each work-in-progress. Each group also has a Member Directory that provides contact information for users who choose to be listed as members of that particular group. Publishing of contact information is on a purely voluntary basis.

### Information Subscriptions: Bringing the Information to You

*Re:NEPA* users have the option of filling out an interest profile that tells *Re:NEPA* what topics are of interest to them. *Re:NEPA* will notify the user via e-mail when new items fitting their interest profile are added to the site by other users. This e-mail contains not only the title of the item but also an abstract of the item and a URL which links directly to the item at *Re:NEPA*.

## How do I access and use *Re:NEPA*'s main features?

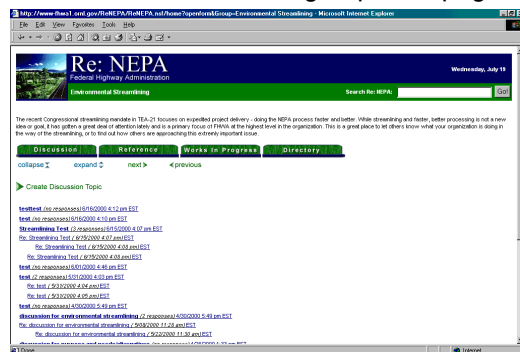
### Accessing *Re:NEPA*

*Re:NEPA* is located at <http://nepa.fhwa.dot.gov>. Users navigate through *Re:NEPA* as through other websites, by clicking on buttons and links to reach different sections of the site. From the home page, users can choose to execute a search, read about *Re:NEPA*, enter a group's subpages, read about the advanced features of the site or click on NEPA-related hyperlinks

to external resources, such as the FHWA Environmental Guidebook. Users can also provide feedback about the site by clicking on the "Feedback" link found at the bottom of the home page, and can send e-mail to the site administrator with any technical comments or questions.

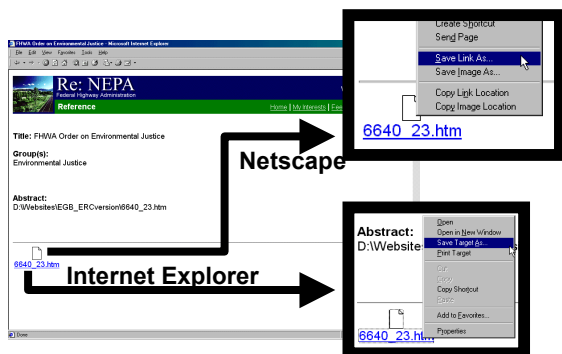
### Accessing a Group

Users can access a group by clicking on the name of that group found in the vertical listing on the *Re:NEPA* home page. This will bring the user to that group's subpages. A description of the group will appear at the top of the page, as well as four tabs that give access to the different sections of each group: discussion, reference, works in progress and member directory.



## Reading and Participating in Discussions

To access a group's discussion, click on the green "Discussion" tab found below the group description. The discussions are arranged into threads—the responses to each discussion item are indented and grouped below the original question or comment, so that users can follow individual discussion threads as they evolve. To view a discussion item or a response to a discussion item, click on its blue highlighted title—this will open the item and you can read the comment, question, or response. You can also view any responses to a discussion item by clicking through the thread found at the bottom of each item. To respond to a discussion item, click on the "Respond" button found beneath the body of the discussion item, accept the default subject or type a new subject, and write your response. To create a new discussion item, click on the "Create New Topic" button found beneath the green tabs, type in a subject and then type in your comment or question.



## Viewing and Downloading References

References are added to **Re:NEPA** by the site administrator. To view a group's reference area, go to that group's subpages and click on the green "Reference" tab. To open an individual reference, click on its blue underlined title. The reference item (a cover sheet for any attached reference documents) will appear in the browser. To view an attachment, such as a WordPerfect or Word document or Adobe Acrobat file, double-click on the attachment icon. This function will only work if your browser is configured to do so—see your office's information technology contact for further browser assistance. To download an attachment onto your computer, right click on the attachment icon—Internet Explorer users then select "Save Target As..." and select a destination for the file, and Netscape users select "Save Link As..." and select a destination for the file.

## Viewing and Downloading Works in Progress

Works in Progress (WIPs) are documents that are in draft format posted at **Re:NEPA** by the site administrator to solicit input (comments and/or revisions) from any interested users. To view a group's WIPs, go to that group's subpages and click on the green "Works in Progress" tab. To open an individual WIP, click on its blue highlighted title. To view and/or download the WIP attachment, follow instructions as outlined in the "Viewing and Downloading References" paragraph above.

## Viewing Member Directories

Each group has a directory that lists all individuals that have chosen to be members of that group and have their contact information displayed on the site. Users specify group membership and whether or not their contact information should be listed online when they create their "My Interests" form. To view a group's member directory, go to that group's subpages and click on the green "Member Directory" tab. Each member's name is listed, and their organization and/or e-mail address is listed if they have chosen to do so on their "My Interests" form.

## Creating and Editing the "My Interests" Form

The "My Interests" form allows users to sign themselves up for group membership, control what contact information (if any) appears in the member directories, and set their e-mail notification preferences. To create a new "My Interests" form, go to the bottom of the **Re:NEPA** home page and click on the "My Interests" link. Then click on the "I want to create a new My Interests form!" graphic to open a new form. If you would like to be listed as a member of one or more groups, fill out the contact information and specify whether or not you want that information to be listed in the directory. Be sure to create a password for yourself—this will let you edit your existing "My Interests" form in the future. Then select which group(s) you'd like to be a member of by checking the box next to each group. The next part of the form lets you set your e-mail notification preferences. To be notified when anything new is added to one or more groups, put a check box next to the name of that group. To be notified when one or more specific keywords are added to the site in discussion, reference or WIP documents, enter those keywords in the box near the bottom of the form. Then click the "Submit" button to complete your form. To edit your existing "My Interests" form, go to the main "My Interests" form and then click on the "I want to edit my existing My Interests form!" link. You will be prompted for your name and your password as entered when you created your My Interests form. Make any desired changes and click the "Submit" button to complete your form.

A screenshot of the "My Interests" form in a web browser. The form has several sections. The first section is for "Personal Information" with fields for Name, Password, Organization, and Email. The second section is "Please list me as a member of the following groups:" with checkboxes for "Environmental Justice", "Environmental Stewardship", "Natural Environment", "NEPA Process/Documentation", and "Purpose and Interests". The third section is "I would like to be notified of new items in these groups:" with checkboxes for the same categories. The fourth section is "I would like to be notified of new items containing these words or phrases:" with a text input field. At the bottom are "Submit" and "Cancel" buttons.

**For more information about using Re:NEPA, contact Lamar Smith of the FHWA Office of NEPA Facilitation at (202) 366-8994.**